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September 18, 2017

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I Section

Advancing technology has been one of the greatest fears in society since the beginning of the technological age. From movies like "*Terminator*" to books like "*Fahrenheit 451*," the views about a futuristic society almost always end with the seemingly impossible- the destruction of humanity. However, many authors, such as Ray Bradbury, would argue that this future is not impossible. In fact, in his stories, he portrays that the dystopia is nearly inevitable. Throughout the short stories "August 2026: There Will Come Soft Rains" and "The Pedestrian," Bradbury demonstrates that technological advancements will destroy humanity through conveying an empty mood, mechanical imagery and futuristic settings.

Bradbury's descriptions of emptiness, solitude and loneliness show humanity's insignificance in a technologically advanced society. In "The Pedestrian," Bradbury uses similes and descriptive language in order to instill this desolate mood. For example, Bradbury writes in this story, "these highways, too, were like streams in a dry season, all stone and bed and moon radiance" (Bradbury 1). Here, Bradbury compares the emptiness of the highway to a dry stream, with no water running through it. This is unusual to the average reader because generally, highways are filled with vehicles at all times of the day. The fact that the ever busy highway is empty causes the reader to feel a greater sense of loneliness. Similarly, the author uses other metaphors in the story to bring about this solitary mood which. This mood, along with the highly autonomous technology in the society, show that society is still able to function even without

humanity's involvement. In contrast, in "There Will Come Soft Rains," Bradbury takes a much more direct approach to portray the theme, stating how meaningless humanity would become in a highly technologically advanced society. In this story, Bradbury references the poem "There Will Come Soft Rains" by Sarah Teasdale. In the poem, Teasdale writes:

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree
If mankind perished utterly;
And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn
Would scarcely know that we were gone,

Showing that the world would not be affected by the removal of humans. This is similar to the meaning of the story itself. In the story, Bradbury depicts the destruction of humanity by using words that result in a lonely mood. For example, the house autonomously performs many different actions, such as making food and setting up tables for card games, but no humans come and use these luxurious facilities. This lack of humanity in the story results in a lonely mood. However, no matter how empty the world is without humans, Bradbury still describes the house as working perfectly. By using these lonely descriptions coupled with the flawless execution of the house, Bradbury is able to convey the insignificance of humanity in a technologically advanced society by showing that even without humans, the world is able to run perfectly. The use of a lonely mood throughout Bradbury's stories convey the insignificance of humanity to a highly advanced society.

Secondly, the futuristic setting described in both stories shows how technology has taken the roles that humanity once played, making humans appear even more insignificant. In "There Will Come Soft Rains," Bradbury uses the setting of the house itself to show the role that humanity has taken in society. The house completes many menial daily tasks, exemplifying

humanity's insignificance: the more humanity advances, the more irrelevant humans will become. On the other hand Bradbury takes a more direct approach in "The Pedestrian," and with the use of descriptive language, is able to portray the theme more effectively. For example, he writes "he couldn't see them men in it for the bright light in his eyes" (Bradbury 1) which implies that there were men in the car, but leads to "there was no one in the front seat," (Bradbury 2) implying that there were no police officers in the car. This use of misdirection makes the audience think throughout most of the story that there is an officer in the car when in reality there is not. This sudden change in information provokes surprise in the reader, making the fact that the police car is completely automated even more significant, furthering the sense of emptiness in society. This sudden shift highlights the insignificance of mankind in this advanced society, expressing the author's views about technology. Thus, Bradbury's use of technological descriptions portrays humanity's insignificance in a technologically advanced society.

The use of mechanical imagery throughout both stories shows Bradbury's negative views on advancing technology. For example, in "The Pedestrian," Bradbury compares descriptions of the street during the day and night. He explains how during the day, the streets were "a thunderous surge of cars, the gas stations open, a great insect rustling and a ceaseless jockeying for position as the scarab-beetles, a faint incense pattering from their exhausts" (Bradbury 1). Descriptive words such as "thunderous" and "pattering" give the atmosphere a highly mechanical vibe, and subtly make the story seem less organic, and therefore more artificial to the readers. This mechanical feeling, coupled with the sense of loneliness, adds to the theme of the insignificance of humans in a technologically advanced society. Also, in "There Will Come Soft Rains," Bradbury uses more description words, such as "thudded," "electric," and "radioactive"

to give the same type of mechanical feeling. Bradbury's use of mechanical descriptive words adds to the theme of human insignificance in an advanced society.

When talking about the end of humanity, one main thing comes to the mind- robots rising up against mankind. Although this may be an extreme scenario, authors of the past also had similar dystopic opinions about the results of technology. "There Will Come Soft Rains" and "The Pedestrian," both works by Bradbury, portray these views on the effects of technology on society. Throughout these stories, Bradbury's repeated descriptions of emptiness, use of futuristic setting and mechanical imagery show his views on how technology will affect humanity in the near future.